

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the thorough examination of the above-referenced patent application, the allowance of claims 12-17, and the indication that claims 2-5, 7, and 9 contain allowable subject matter.

In this Amendment, Applicants have made an editorial amendment to paragraph [0024] in the specification without adding new matter to the application. Further, Applicants have amended claims 2, 4, 7 and 9, and canceled claims 1, 6, 8, 10 and 11, and added claims 18-25. After entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 2, 4, 7, 9, 12, 18 and 22 are the independent claims of this application. For at least the following reasons, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

Claims 2, 4, 7 and 9 have been amended into independent form to include all of the features of base claim 1 from which they directly depend. As the Office Action admitted that these claims contained allowable subject matter, it is respectfully submitted that the independent claims 2, 4, 7, and 9 are now in condition for allowance. Further, claims 3 and 5 are allowable since they respectively depend from on claims 2 and 4, as well as for the additional features recited therein.

For at least the foregoing reasons, claims 2-5, 7, and 9 are in condition for allowance. Claims 12-17 were allowed by the Office Action. Finally, Applicants submit that new claims 18-25 are in condition for allowance. In this regard, these claims embody features that clearly define over the cited art of record.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all pending claims are in proper condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite the examination of the above-identified patent application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

No fee is believed to be due in connection with this amendment and response to Office Action. If, however, any fee is believed to be due, you are hereby authorized to charge any such fee to deposit account No. 20-0778.

Respectfully submitted,

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